



3. "Twilight" is a conventional vampire film with all the usual stereotypes.  
A. Right B. Wrong C. Doesn't say

4. The main actors are very talented young persons.  
A. Right B. Wrong C. Doesn't say

5. There are breathtaking landscapes shown in the film.  
A. Right B. Wrong C. Doesn't say

**SUBIECTUL al II-lea**

**(60 de puncte)**

**Read the text below. For questions 1-10, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.**

MEDITATION and mindfulness: the words conjure images of yoga retreats and Buddhist monks. But perhaps they should evoke a very different picture: a man in a deerstalker, puffing away at a curved pipe, Mr. Sherlock Holmes himself. The world's greatest fictional detective is someone who knows the value of concentration, of "throwing his brain out of action," as Dr. Watson puts it. He is the quintessential unitasker in a multitasking world.

More often than not, when a new case is presented, Holmes does nothing more than sit back in his leather chair, close his eyes and put together his long-fingered hands in an attitude that begs silence. He may be the most inactive active detective out there. His approach to thought captures the very thing that cognitive psychologists mean when they say mindfulness.

Though the concept originates in ancient Buddhist, Hindu and Chinese traditions, when it comes to experimental psychology, mindfulness is less about spirituality and more about concentration: the ability to quiet your mind, focus your attention on the present, and dismiss any distractions that come your way. The formulation dates from the work of the psychologist Ellen Langer, who demonstrated in the 1970s that mindful thought could lead to improvements on measures of cognitive function and even vital functions in older adults. Now we're learning that the benefits may reach further still, and be more attainable, than Professor Langer could have then imagined. Even in small doses, mindfulness can effect impressive changes in how we feel and think — and it does so at a basic neural level.

In 2011, researchers from the University of Wisconsin demonstrated that daily meditation-like thought could shift frontal brain activity toward a pattern that is associated with what cognitive scientists call positive, approach-oriented emotional states — states that make us more likely to engage the world rather than to withdraw from it.

But mindfulness goes beyond improving emotion regulation. An exercise in mindfulness can also help with that plague of modern existence: multitasking. Of course, we would like to believe that our attention is infinite, but it isn't. Multitasking is a persistent myth. What we really do is shift our attention rapidly from task to task. Two bad things happen as a result. We don't devote as much attention to any one thing, and we sacrifice the quality of our attention. When we are mindful, some of that attentional flightiness disappears as if of its own accord.

The concentration benefits of mindfulness training aren't just behavioral; they're physical. In recent years, mindfulness has been shown to improve connectivity inside our brain's attentional networks, as well as between attentional and medial frontal regions — changes that save us from distraction. Mindfulness, in other words, helps our attention networks communicate better and with fewer interruptions than they otherwise would.

The difference between a Holmes and a Watson is, essentially, one of practice. Attention is finite, it's true — but it is also trainable. Through modifying our practices of thought toward a more Holmes-like concentration, we can build up neural real estate that is better able to deal with the varied demands of the endlessly multitasking, infinitely connected modern world. And even if we've never attempted mindfulness in the past, we might be surprised at how quickly the benefits become noticeable.

(Adapted from *The New York Times*)

1. According to the first paragraph Mr. Sherlock Holmes is famous for
  - A. his ability to focus and concentrate.
  - B. his ability to multitask.
  - C. his friendship with Dr. Watson.
  - D. using yoga techniques.
2. Holmes' technique when presented with a new case is to
  - A. beg Dr. Watson for silence.
  - B. do nothing;
  - C. sit and concentrate.
  - D. be very active.
3. Mindfulness is
  - A. the capacity to concentrate.
  - B. a Buddhist spiritual concept.
  - C. related to experimental psychology.
  - D. only Sherlock Holmes' ability.
4. Ellen Langer is the person who
  - A. was the only woman psychologist in the 1970s.
  - B. developed the concept of mindfulness.
  - C. demonstrated that mindful thought made us healthy.
  - D. found the measures of cognitive function.
5. Today, the findings of Professor Langer
  - A. have been proven false and unfounded.
  - B. have been accepted and taken one step further.
  - C. cannot be imagined by most people.
  - D. are more attainable than in the 1970s.
6. Researchers from the University of Wisconsin have demonstrated that
  - A. daily meditation techniques create a major change in our brains.
  - B. daily meditation techniques will help us emotionally.
  - C. daily meditation techniques make us more positive and active.
  - D. daily meditation techniques will make us withdraw from the world.
7. According to the 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph, multitasking
  - A. is something that does not really exist in the modern world.
  - B. is the proof that our attention is infinite and can be developed.
  - C. happens when we sacrifice the quality of our attention.
  - D. is something that can be improved by exercises in mindfulness.
8. The concentration benefits of mindfulness training are
  - A. behavioral and attentional.
  - B. physical and attentional.
  - C. behavioral and physical.
  - D. impossible to clarify and explain.

9. According to the last paragraph, attention is something

- A. fine and educable.
- B. fine but not educable.
- C. limited and not educable.
- D. limited but educable.

10. The writer of the article uses Sherlock Holmes as

- A. an example of someone who is able to multitask efficiently.
- B. an example of someone who has used meditation techniques.
- C. the person who discovered and developed mindfulness.
- D. an example of someone with a great power of concentration.

## PRODUCEREA DE MESAJE SCRISE

### SUBIECTUL I

**(40 de puncte)**

You have just graduated high school and you have received an email from your friend in Denmark who congratulates you and asks you about your plans for the future. Write him/her an email thanking him/her and describing your plans. **Write your answer in 80 - 100 words.**

### SUBIECTUL al II-lea

**(60 de puncte)**

You have recently had a class discussion on the importance of friends and friendship in our lives. Your teacher has asked you to write an essay, giving your opinion on the following statement: *Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: "What! You too? I thought I was the only one."* - C.S. Lewis. **Write your essay in 180 - 200 words.**